

COVID-19

Lee Savarrio - Chief of Dentistry Update (2-10-2020)

It remains a very difficult time for all of us, with changes to rules within local areas and the impending threat of further nationwide restrictions. Now as much as ever we need to work together for the good of our patients.

Please find below the notable areas for information for our services as an Oral Health Directorate.

Urgent Dental Care Centres – Surgery Booking

As promised, we have implemented a booking system that will allow General Dental Practitioners who are unable to provide urgent AGPs within their own practices the ability to book a slot within a PDS site for them to undertake the treatment by themselves or by a nominee from their practice. You should by now have received the booking guidance and form, which was sent direct to your practice generic email account to progress this. Just to remind you that under IRMER legislation, you will only be able to use the PDS UDCC radiography equipment if you have undergone a competency assessment by one of the PDS Radiation Protection Team. If the nominated dentist has not had this completed, can you please contact the team on 0141 531 8120 to arrange this prior to the patient's appointment. We would require a minimum of an hour to complete the process. When calling to arrange your IRMER competency assessment please indicate if this will be your first time providing care at the UDCC such that further induction on your first day can be arranged.

Implementing this above booking system will allow the PDS and HDS teams to focus on their areas of expertise and restart their own services. The patients under the care of the PDS teams need to begin to have their planned care delivered starting with those whose care has been prioritised as requiring to be expedited soon.

I also thought it may be helpful to remind you/ highlight the following:

- Although there are no patient charges it is imperative during this time that you continue to submit all GP17 forms to PSD since this is how your "activity" is being monitored in relation to the care you are providing to your NHS patients.
- You will already have received information in relation to the restart of Public Dental Services which included the revised clinical offer and acceptance criteria.

- Referrals for Oral Surgery (including extractions) should be made by following the Secondary Care SCI referral pathway rather than through the UDCCs as we move toward freeing up PDS teams. Keep in mind colleagues in GDS that also may be accepting referral for NHS oral surgical procedures and may also be able to see your patient for you where specialist treatment is not required. Please also be mindful that the rapid referral service into maxfac has been available throughout the pandemic and is still the best route to get urgent suspicious lesions assessed. If in doubt at all a telephone call may also be beneficial.
- Our Health Improvement Team are in the process of contacting all practices double checking information in relation AGPs, PPE requirements and deliveries and face fit testing. I understand that you may feel some of this is a duplication but I am sure you will appreciate the collation of all of this information is difficult and the co-ordination, allocation and distribution arrangements are logistically very challenging.
- I appreciate you may be suffering from survey fatigue, however there are still 2 live survey's which you should make sure that you complete, the first relates to your intention to undertake NHS AGPs and this lets us arrange your allocation of both simple and enhanced PPE and the second is to allow us to plan for future PPE requirements as we move towards the next phase of delivery of non-urgent AGPs for NHS patients in dental practices.
- Thank you to all staff who have offered to participate in this year's seasonal flu vaccination programme. Once again our dental teams have risen to the challenge and offered their services in all three of our areas.
- Currently at GDH and the UDCCs we are assisting in a national covid-19 surveillance programme for dental patients to try and see the background levels of covid in the community that are asymptomatic. Public Health are currently seeking expressions of interest from practices that would be willing volunteers to undertake swabbing of their patients as they attend as part of the expansion of that effort. Currently it is expressions of interest to register your practice as a possible site in the future.

As we continue to work through the ever evolving Covid-19 situation, it feels like a good time to remind ourselves of the basics of good preventive care and how important these remain within and outwith the clinical environment:

- Strict adherence to SOPs religiously in clinical areas. In non-clinical areas;
- Maintain good hand hygiene (frequent thorough hand washing preferable to gel rub) and refrain from touching the face.
- Observe physical distancing – also in the clinical environment and especially at break times. Where this is impossible face coverings should be worn.
- Practice and respectfully support others to adhere to these basic principles of good infection and prevention control measures.

Our compliance now helps us all keep our patients, colleagues, selves and families safe.

Stay Safe and Look After One Another

We are currently working on a protocol for our Public Health colleagues for Test and Protect teams and dental teams for information around what constitutes a “close contact” in the dental setting. This should help for those who experience a member of staff or patient that tests positive for Covid-19. This will be predicated on strict adherence to above and so could help in minimising the need for self-isolation in the dental workplace.



Kind regards,
Lee Savarrio, Chief of Dentistry